

A Commentary of Toward Understanding Satanism



Understanding and Defining Satanism

To begin to understand and appreciate and thus acquire some knowledge of some subject it is obviously necessary to know what that subject is about, what it deals with, and what its character – its essential nature – is, and this knowing begins, should begin, by defining it.

A definition should have clarity and precision. For a definition is: (1) Stating exactly what a thing is, or what a word means; (2) A precise statement of the essential nature of a thing; (3) A declaration or formal explanation of the signification of a word or phrase; (4) Precision, exactitude; (5) The setting of bounds or limits of something.

Let us therefore, as is only logical and scholarly, begin with the definition of the term Satanism given in the complete Oxford English Dictionary (20 vols, 2nd edition, Oxford, 1989), a work regarded as an authoritative source, and as the definitive record of the English language. The two main definitions of Satanism are:

1. A satanic or diabolical disposition, doctrine, spirit, or contrivance.
2. The worship of Satan, alleged to have been practised in France in the latter part of the 19th century; the principles and rites of the Satanists.

These lead us on to the definitions of words such as satanic, diabolical, and Satan, and thence to words such as Devil, fiendish, evil, and wicked.

Satanic: (1) Of or pertaining to Satan. (2) Characteristic of or befitting Satan; extremely wicked, diabolical, devilish, infernal. (3) Satanic school n. Southey's designation for Byron, Shelley, and their imitators; subsequently often applied to other writers similarly accused of defiant impiety and delight in the portraiture of lawless passion.

Diabolical: (1) Of or pertaining to the devil; actuated by or proceeding from the devil; of the nature of the devil. (2) Characteristic of or befitting the devil; devilish, fiendish, atrociously wicked or malevolent.

Satan: (1) The proper name of the supreme evil spirit, the Devil. (2) In the etymological sense of 'adversary', with allusion to Matt. xvi. 23,

Mark viii. 33.

Devil: (1) In Jewish and Christian theology, the proper appellation of the supreme spirit of evil, the tempter and spiritual enemy of mankind, the foe of God and holiness, otherwise called Satan. (2) (*transf.*) A human being of diabolical character or qualities; a malignantly wicked or cruel man; a 'fiend in human form'.

Fiendish: Resembling, or characteristic of, a fiend; superhumanly cruel and malignant. Also as adv., excessively, horribly.

Wicked:

(1) Bad in moral character, disposition, or conduct; inclined or addicted to wilful wrong-doing; practising or disposed to practise evil; morally depraved. (A term of wide application, but always of strong reprobation, implying a high degree of evil quality.)

(2) Designating a stock evil character in a fairy-tale, as Wicked Fairy, Wicked Stepmother, etc.

(3) Bad, in various senses (not always clearly distinguishable). Frequent in Middle English use; later chiefly *dial.*, or in colloq. use as a conscious metaphor (now often jocular), and implying 'very or excessively bad', 'horrid', 'beastly'.

(4) Actually or potentially harmful, destructive, disastrous, or pernicious; baleful.

(5) In weakened or lighter sense, usually more or less jocular: Malicious; mischievous, sly.

Evil: (1) To harm or injure; to ill-treat. (2) Bad, wicked. (3) Doing or tending to do harm; hurtful, mischievous, misleading. (4) Offensive, disagreeable; troublesome. (5) Hard, difficult, deadly.

These definitions describe in a precise way the character – the essential nature – of Satanism, and set the bounds, the limits of what is Satanic. They also reveal four interesting things. First, the early use of the term Satanic to pejoratively and peripherally describe the life-style of some people as 'defiantly impious' and as having a 'lawless passion' (that is, and for example, an indulgence in carnality and such things as may excite and intoxicate the senses without due regard to modesty, temperance, and social approbation). Second, the sense of Satan as adversary ^[1]. Third, how – in the English language – terms such as wicked have more than one sense, depending on context and tone, so that that word wicked can denote someone who is evil or who inclines toward 'evil' or

someone who is just being horrid or someone who is mischievous and sly. Fourth, how the essence of Satanism, its character and its boundaries, are defined by terms such as wicked, mischievous, sly, harmful, destructive, disastrous, pernicious, baleful, destructive.

The dictionary definition of Satanism should be not accepted. Satan is not the Satan of Christianity and this includes the Satan of LaVey howsoever 'atheistic' it is [now] claimed to be. The essence of Satanism is opposition. Opposition to what? Opposition to (i) Might Is Right acceptance of dogma; i.e. do what we say or else be punished, and the acceptance of this ideation via wishing harm upon another for not accepting the dogma (ii) The acceptance of the ego as the self, the acceptance of mental constructs as objective reality (iii) Willful ignorance and misuse of the human faculty and potential of the mind and the principles that govern it - which may be discovered through psychology, philosophy and experimentation.

Thus it could be argued (with the proviso given below) that the two standard definitions of Satanism given above - and taken in context with how the words used in the definitions are subsequently defined - in some way encompass, and so may describe, much modern (post-Byronic) Satanism and many (perhaps most) individuals who publicly profess or have professed (in the last sixty years or so) to being Satanists. For example, (i) the overt showman-like 'impiety' and the 'deification of the self and indulgence in the pleasures of the flesh' of LaVey and his Church of Satan; (ii) the Left Hand Path initiatory approach of the Temple of Set (according to how they define the LHP) ^[2]; (iii) the eclectic individualism, atheism, 'social Darwinism', and 'rational egoism' ^[3], of many self-professed American Satanists; and (iv) the overtly religious approach of those describing themselves as 'theistic Satanist' for whom Satan is or may be a real deity.

For, (i) in respect of LaVey and his Church of Satan, there certainly is a carnal indulgence, not to mention a somewhat 'stock portrayal' of a character generally regarded as 'evil' - the costumes; the shaved head; the goatee beard; even (sometimes) the horns; (ii) in respect of the Temple of Set (ToS), there is the assertion of "the actual existence of Satan, as Set"; ^[4]; (iii) in respect of most modern self-professed Satanists there is the carnal indulgence, and delight in one's "lawless" (that is, self-indulgent) passions; (iv) in respect of theistic Satanists, there is of course a belief in Satan (whosoever described and of whatever lineage) and an acceptance of or a belief in the supra-personal (supernatural) power of that deity.

Notice, however, that what is lacking in all of these modern groups and individuals are the following standard attributes of Satanism, of the diabolical, and of the Satanic:

- (a) practising or disposed to practise evil;
- (b) actually or potentially harmful, destructive, disastrous, or pernicious; baleful;
- (c) malicious; mischievous, sly;
- (d) bad in moral character, disposition
- (e) hard, difficult, misleading, deadly, amoral.

Causal denotata are used in different ways, typically in MSS. There is almost always an exoteric meaning and an esoteric meaning, typically the esoteric meaning follows the etymological origin or historical usage of a word. With this understanding, let us re-consider the words above.

(a) Practising or disposed to practise evil.

O9A Definition And Use

In an early typewritten text titled *Diabolic Etymology* written many years before the era of the public Internet and included in volume one of *Hostia* published in 1992, {1} the O9A defined 'evil' by reference to its early use in the English language:

"The word 'evil' derives from the Gothic 'ubils' which meant a 'going beyond' (the due measure) - and did not have a 'moral' sense. Only later (under the influence of Nazarene theology) did it acquire a strict moral sense, and became an abstract absolute." {2}

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(b) Actually or potentially harmful, destructive, disastrous, or pernicious; baleful.

(Harm) from Old English hearm "hurt, pain; evil, grief; insult," from Proto-Germanic *harmaz (source also of Old Saxon harm, Old Norse harmr "grief, sorrow," Old Frisian herm "insult; pain," Old High German harm, German Harm "grief, sorrow, harm"), from Proto Indo-European *kormo- "pain." This is the πάθος of πάθει μάθος, learning from adversity.

(Destructive) from Latin destruere "tear down, demolish," literally "un-build," from de "un-, down" and struere "to pile, build" (from Proto Indo-European *streu-, extended form of root *stere- "to spread").

(Disastrous) literally "ill-starred," from dis- "ill" and astro "star, planet," from Latin astrum, from Greek ἄστρον (astron) "star"

(c) This is in reference to the Labyrinthos Mythologicus, the occultic system used in MSS to differentiate the potential adepts from the mundanes.

(d) Given the Way is amoral (i.e. non-moral, neither declaring a thing good and permissible or wrong and forbidden) this re-presents a glimpse of the Labyrinthos Mythologicus.

(e) The Way is hard and difficult, there are ever changing answers that may only work for a certain period of time (such as the weltanschauung of the initiate no longer being appropriate for an external adept and that weltanschauung no longer being appropriate to the internal adept) so it then misleading. The static Satanisms, the Satanisms and methods which declare a simple truth and view

that changes little - as found among most occultists and Satanists today - are not the true Satanism. Satanism cannot be confined to a dogmatic set of beliefs and practices with false-truths lacking nuance.

Satanism is deadly. Exoterically, one may be easily killed by the ones who oppose Satanism. Esoterically, Satanism involves the death of an egoic identity and this death occurs many times. Death occurs at each stage of the 7 Fold Way and there are many micro-deaths and micro-births (e.g via insight) within each sphere. It occurs most prominently at the abyss, the stage between external adept and internal adept.

Thus such modern groups and individuals are - despite their efforts to promote themselves as Satanists - at best only peripheral, or Byronesque, Satanists, since they do not champion, and certainly do not practice, what is socially and individually harmful, destructive, disastrous, pernicious, baleful, deadly, malicious, malevolent, sly, and offensive.

In comparison to all other modern self-professed Satanist groups, and in contrast to those individuals who publicly profess or have professed (in the last sixty years or so) to being Satanists, the Order of Nine Angles is, and always have been, different and, from the viewpoint of these other Satanists, a Satanic heresy.

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Notes

[1] The Order Of Nine Angles And The Question Of Evil